

FMS Foundation Newsletter

March 15, 1992

Dear Friends,

Your foundation has now been formed and is incorporated under the name *FMS Foundation* (for False Memory Syndrome) in the state of Pennsylvania. The Foundation is designed to be a public foundation created for charitable purposes, gifts to which will be tax deductible. (Qualification with the Internal Revenue Service is required, but we are assured by the Foundation's law firm, Drinker, Biddle and Reath, that that this qualification will come.) A number of us have already contributed significant amounts of money (for these newsletters, the 800 number, legal services) and going forward it will be necessary to rent offices, acquire office equipment, employ staff, pay office expenses, meet further legal fees and defray all those expenses required of a serious operation. Initially we are asking for annual dues of \$100 per family. Please make out your checks to FMS Foundation and send them to 2020 1/2 Addison Street, Philadelphia, PA 19146. Now. In fact, such dues payments will not be sufficient to cover expenses—not to mention the sort of programs described below—and we need additional contributions of significance. Do what you can.

Pamela

HOW THE FOUNDATION CAME INTO BEING

"You can't imagine how many calls I get from people with the same story as yours," the therapist told me on the phone during the summer of 1991. "Well, then, please have them contact me," I replied. And you did. First a call from California, then another from California and then three from New York. What an amazing relief to be able to be able to talk to people who understood! When we made contact with a group of seven families in the Midwest who had already had a meeting, we suspected that we were dealing with a large scale social phenomenon.

800 NUMBER

In early November 1991, the four "East Coast" families met in New York to figure out *how* we could reach other falsely accused families. We decided to start by placing the following notice wherever we could:

Has your grown child falsely accused you as a consequence of repressed "memories?" You are not alone. Please help us document the scope of this problem. Contact: 1-800-568-8882.

We asked Hollida Wakefield and Ralph Underwager at the Institute for Psychological Therapies if they would help us if we paid for the phone and time for a person to answer.

LETTERS

We also decided that we would write, write, write, to newspapers, to magazines, to professionals. We had to find ways to get people to hear our story. Every time we saw an article that presented only one side of the false accusation story, we asked to have the other side told too. We got help. Friends helped. They stood by us and they wrote too. Doctors helped. They sent in proposals to give talks on false-accusations.

One of the people we wrote to was Darrell Sifford, a columnist for the *Philadelphia Inquirer*. We met with Mr. Sifford who seemed to understand immediately what was taking place in the world of therapy. He then wrote a series of articles about falsely accused parents. Those sensitive and well written articles let many of you know about our group. One man in Chicago, for example, saw a reprint of a column in an out-of-town newspaper that someone had left in a gym in Chicago. In this mailing, we enclose the last article that Mr. Sifford wrote about us. Darrell Sifford gave us an eloquent voice.

Darrell Sifford died while on vacation last week. "His articles were like a life preserver to a drowning person," one mother said on the phone. Mr. Sifford was so deeply upset by the nature of the false-allegations against us and by the strange sort of "therapy" that our children were receiving that he intended to write a book about our situation.

We are indebted to Darrell Sifford. He was a good friend. Our honor to him will come through the work of the FMS Foundation.

SURVEY

By December, we realized that we also needed to find ways to provide people with accurate statistics about falsely accused families. A parent provided us with a small grant to begin a survey that could be done without compromising our anonymity. It is not so much that we fear public scorn, because we know we have done nothing wrong, but rather the desire to protect our other children and our own parents that has kept most of us silent. We need to collect accurate information in a systematic and confidential way that can be used by lawyers and mental health professionals and people who begin to study this phenomenon. To date, approximately 100 families have responded to the survey which we are now starting to analyze. We haven't completed enough yet to say more than that we are an extremely diverse group in terms of religious preference, that the oldest person to have a revelation of memories was a 54 year old woman and that the effects of the accusations are felt by many more people than the accused. We are getting many requests from many areas about the survey. I am most often asked about the therapists, "Are they quacks?" By and large it does not seem so.

THE FOUNDATION IS BORN

Each of you has brought something special to our group. We are indebted to you all for making contact and for helping to reach out to other families. It is our numbers that will let the world know how widespread this nonsense has become. This nonsense has devastated us: lawsuits, deaths, divorces, broken families, heartbreak. With the survey we'll soon have numbers to document the devastation.

We are especially indebted to the members of one family because of their generous gift of the organizational talent and financial resources that have enabled us to create FMS Foundation. With the Foundation, we should become an effective presence in what Sifford called the BIG BANG of therapy in the 1990's.

FOUNDATION ACTIVITIES UNDERWAY

We expect that foundation dues will cover expenses for:

- Toll free number
- Newsletter to families and supporters
- Survey of families

Some of the activities to start with the founding of the foundation as our resources permit:

- Press releases with accurate information on topics such as child abuse statistics and memory.
- Resource center for legal cases involving repressed memories. Because so many cases are settled out of court, they do not make it into the legal database. A parent has already pledged a sum to initiate this work which we will complete by summer.
- Study of beliefs of mental health professionals.
- Other things that you tell us need to be done to help you.

WHERE DO 243 FAMILIES LIVE?

AZ (2)	CA (16)	CO (4)	DE (1)
FL (7)	GA (4)	IA (1)	IL (7)
IN (5)	MA (2)	MD (2)	MI (12)
MN (3)	MS (1)	MT (1)	NC (3)
NJ (16)	NY (14)	OH (18)	PA (93)
SC (1)	TX (4)	UT (5)	VA (2)
WI (16)	ON (Canada) (2)	ABROAD (1)	

REQUEST FROM A FAMILY

Are you or have you been involved in a lawsuit brought on the basis of recovery of repressed "memories?" We are being sued by our daughter, and we would like to network with others in the same or similar situations.

Because FMS will not release names or material of members, you must tell us in writing under what circumstances you wish to have your phone number shared. If you wish to reply to this family, please write to FMS:

"You may send my name to the family wishing to make contact with other families involved in lawsuits brought because of recovery of repressed memories."

Name:

Phone Number:

A Visit to the State Attorney General

One of our Texas members asked us to share her experiences of going to the State Attorney General's office to gather information about licensed therapists. This is the office that can inform you of the appropriate regulatory body (if there is one) for any classification of mental health professional.

She asked me particularly to tell you that the staff was most courteous after she and her husband told them about the false accusations of incest. Several times in our phone conversation our parent-turned-investigator said, "They were so nice to us. They were so helpful once we started talking to them. They said to us, 'You're not hippies!'" She said, "It's important that we get out and let these people meet us."

In Texas, she reported, the State Attorney General is trying to get Licensed Professional Counselors to stop using "projective techniques." She found that therapists are supposed to have special training to use projective techniques such as hypnosis. She discovered that some therapists are calling themselves doctor when they do not legitimately have the title.

Our parent-investigator said that if you have any questions about the qualifications of your child's therapist, you can go first to the State Attorney General's Office to learn which regulatory board is responsible. Once you have that information, you can find out the therapist's qualifications.

FBI ASKS US TO STOP

Kenneth Lanning, the author of the excellent FBI publication, *Investigator's Guide to Allegations of "Ritual" Child Abuse*, January 1992, has asked if we would please stop calling the FBI for this booklet. Not only have they run out of copies, we are clogging the phone line. Since we are allowed to reproduce this book, we are checking into the cost. We will let you know how to purchase it in the next newsletter.

READINGS YOU RECOMMEND

Codependency Conspiracy by Dr. Stan Katz and Amiee Liu, New York: Time Warner, 1991.

What to Do when Psychotherapy Goes Wrong by Shirley Siegel, Seattle, WA: Stop Abuse By Counselors Publishing, 1991. (Stop ABC, 5651 S 144 th Street, Seattle, WA 98168)

One Family's Story: Where is Our Daughter?

In January 1990, we contacted our local mental health facility to seek help for our 18 year old daughter who had come home from college claiming that she was having nightmares of being sexually abuse at the age of 5. After one month of both individual and family counseling, the counselor determined that our daughter, and also our 15 year old son, were victims of satanic cult abuse.

At first, we, accepted the diagnosis because the counselor stated that she had outside satanic cult experts to confirm the diagnosis. Who were we to argue with professionals? As time went on, however, our daughter's condition deteriorated. In June, after our son refused to meet with the counselor on an individual basis any longer, she accused my wife of being a willing active participant in the satanic cult abuse. Our son was accused of being an anti-christ.

In early September of 1990, we decided to seek a second professional opinion regarding our daughter's diagnosis and current mental health. Shortly after that, our daughter disappeared and was last seen having lunch with her mental health counselor and three law enforcement officers from another state. When questioned by the authorities, all four professionals admit to having lunch with our daughter... but strongly deny any knowledge of where she is.

We have not heard from our daughter since.

We realize that due to our daughter's age, no one can be of any help in locating her... if she chooses not to be found. We do feel that we have an obligation to make every effort possible in stopping this kind of situation occurring to another unsuspecting family.

We believe that federal funds that were solicited by the local mental health center were fraudulently used. The mental health center today continues to promote the idea that satanic cults are running rampant throughout the mid-west.

We have been frantically searching for our daughter for over 18 months.

Where is our daughter?

Texas Area

March 20 & 21, 1992

**Workshops in Memory
with**

Hollida Wakefield

Dr. Ralph Underwager

Institute for Psychological Therapies

EXPLORING TRAUMATIC MEMORIES

Friday March 20, 1992

7:00 - 9:00 P.M. (free)

MAGIC, MISCHIEF AND MEMORIES:

REMEMBERING REPPRESSED ABUSE

Saturday March 21, 1992

9:00 A.M. - 4:00 P.M. \$10.00

Continuing Education Credit Available \$40.00

Sponsored by

Coalition on Emotional Freedom

13410 Preston Road, Suite 1

Box 129

Dallas, Texas 75240

Philadelphia Area

Next meeting

Saturday, April 11, 1992

1:00 P.M.

Map enclosed for Philadelphia area

Agenda:

Forming working committees

Midwest Area

Saturday, April 25, 1992

1:00 P.M.

Benton Harbor Michigan

Holiday Inn - Holidome

1-800-HOLIDAY

2860 M 139 South (49022)

I-94 exit 28

Ask for room in Holidome Area

Participants should make own reservations.

AARP prices.

Please send suggestions for agenda.

Contact Liz 708-827-1056

New York Area

Report of Meeting Sunday March 8, 1992

Our meeting, though comparatively small, was certainly informative. We were 14 including Michael Flomenhaft and Galen Kelly.

Michael, an attorney, has apparently worked on cases with Richard Ofshe and is working on some sort of a cult project at this time. He feels he is very experienced in cases of mind control and our problems, of course, fall into this category. Essentially he spoke of several possible options that we might consider after more research into this complicated problem. This would, of course, vary from state to state.

Galen spoke about our problems and how it related to cults. He sees this phenomenon as a well networked sub culture. He, too, will be doing more investigating.

Important Notice

One of our parents is a publisher who has the talent and the ability to write and publish a book of our stories. This is a vitally important project. We must have our stories told. A visit to your local bookstore "recovery" section will attest to the many books available to help "adult survivors of sexual abuse." We do not want to minimize the horror of real sexual abuse. We are concerned, however, that over zealous and unfounded accusations will ultimately undo the important progress that has been made in this area.

We need your stories for this book as quickly as possible. We want to have the book completed by June to use for media purposes.

Do not worry if your story is not polished. Professional writers will help with this project. All names and identifying references will be removed.

Send your story to:

FMS Foundation

2020 1/2 Addison Street

Philadelphia, PA 19146

Please label it as a story to be published.